Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

E. H. Heywood's trial will probably begin during the last week of March or the first week of April.

Elisée Reclus has gone to Asia Minor to gather materials for the eleventh volume of his great work on "Universal Geography."

The party in power is always the party of centralization; the party out of power is always the party of decentralization. All parties wish more Liberty when they are not masters. Only those who despise power altogether can be steadfast friends of Liberty.

In the closing sentence of his Fast Day proclamation Governor Butler warns the parsons off his ground. This, too, after he has just invaded theirs. Probably parsons will continue to preach political sermons as long as governors issue theological proclamations.

The English Society for the Suppression of Blasphemous Literature, having won a shameful victory by securing the imprisonment for a year of G. W. Foote, editor of the London "Freethinker," now proposes, flushed with its success, to prosecute Huxley, Tyndall, and Spencer. We earnestly hope it will. Nothing better could happen for the cause of free speech than a verdict against one of these men.

None of the newspapers, in their obituaries of Richard Wagner, the greatest musical composer the world has yet seen, mention the fact that he was an Anarchist. Such, however, is the truth. For a long time he was intimately associated with Michael Bakounine, and imbibed the Russian reformer's enthusiasm for the destruction of the old order and the creation of the new. Once, indeed, when Wagner went so far as to propose the destruction of the art treasures in the Dresden museum on the ground that the future would replace them with better, Bakounine was compelled to restrain his ardor. It is interesting to know that the prophet of "the music of the future" foresaw also the society of the future.

Liberty predicted in its last issue that the social revolution would break out in France within a year unless Kropotkine and his fellow-prisoners should be released. It begins to look as though we had set it too far ahead. The aspect of affairs in Paris is ominous. Thousands of armed workmen marching and countermarching in the streets, the police arresting the leaders and the military charging upon the masses, and the crowds dispersed at one point immediately concentrating at another. Meanwhile the Republican reformers (?) of the Gambetta type are discussing petty questions in the chamber of deputies, and it is left for the Catholic members to point out, as one of them did the other day, that "cavalry charges will not solve social questions." Perhaps the day of reckoning is coming sooner than we thought.

Such an article as that which "Max" writes for Liberty in another column is most encouraging, showing as it does that true economic ideas are beginning to displace the anti-Chinese craze. It needs, however, to be supplemented in one particular. Free access to the land is not the only thing necessary. Land is useless to either white or yellow men without tools to work it with, and the bankers as effectually monopolize tools as the landlords monopolize the land. That is to say, they monopolize the issuance of the money with which tools are bought, and are thus enabled to dictate the ruinous rates of discount which farmers and others are compelled to pay for the use of capital. Strike down money monopoly as well as land monopoly; strip the banker of his power to exact interest at the same time that you strip the landlord of his power to exact rent; and then, as "Max" says, every man's wages, be he Chinaman or Caucasian, will be his product or its equivalent.

The "International Review" has passed into new hands, being now published in Philadelphia under the editorship of W. R. Balch, formerly a Boston journalist. The liberal tone of the contents of the first number issued under the new *régime* is in marked and surprising contrast with the periodical's previous orthodoxy and conservatism. Almost every article handles some live question. Co-education of the sexes and trial by jury are vigorously championed against recent assaults, and H. M. Hyndman's second paper on the "Social Reconstruction of England," which was refused by the "North American Review" after it had printed the first, appears in its pages. Mr. Hyndman is the leading English disciple of Karl Marx, and in this essay he advocates his master's principle of State absorption of all industries. Of course he gets no sympathy from Liberty in this, but nevertheless we rejoice to see a hearing given to such outspoken opposition to the present capitalistic system. Moreover, the writer tells much important truth. For instance — and we commend this to Henry George and his followers — he points out that in controlling capital you incidentally and necessarily abolish landlordism, while in simply abolishing landlordism you may strengthen the power of capital. Those who expect the millennium to follow the solution of the land question would do well to heed this fact. But the most astonishing feature of the "International's" table of contents is a downright free-love article by Edward Quincy, Jr., a writer heretofore unknown to us. We cannot refrain from quoting a few of his opening and closing sentences. "The history of the human race, briefly phrased, is the advancement from slavery to liberty. . . . Inch by inch, through ages of conflict, the ground has been won. . . . It is the part of wise generalship not to leave the forts and strongholds intact along the frontier of the territory that has been conquered. . . . One of the citadels of priestcraft, indeed one of its very bastiles, by the strength of which it gained and for so long a time retained its ascendancy over the masses, still remains, its walls intact, its banners and ensigns still defiantly flaunting. This menacing bastile of priestly supremacy is indissoluble marriage. . . . Love, to be love, must not, cannot, be otherwise than free. It is not a matter to be regulated by statute and controlled by indissoluble bonds. People cannot be made to love each other by law. The law of love is the law of liberty, and in that law the behests of Scripture, of reason, and of conscience unite in enjoining us to 'stand fast.'" To what bolder sentiment has Liberty ever given voice? We congratulate the "International" upon its entrance into a new path, and hope it will not deviate therefrom.

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BOSTON, MASS., MARCH 17, 1883.

"A free man is one who enjoys the use of his reason and his faculties; who is neither blinded by passion, nor hindered or driven by oppression, nor deceived by erroneous opinions." — PROUDHON.

An Editorial Astray.

[The article printed below, Liberty half suspects, originated in the new editorial rooms of the "Daily Advertiser," though we cannot positively say that it did. This suspicion is based on certain bits of internal evidence which we cannot put aside, and yet we may be as much mistaken as are those who affirm, from similar ear marks found in the plays of Shakspere that those immortal works of genius came from the brain of one Lord Bacon. But the mystery which is even in a greater degree perplexing the mind of Liberty's editor is why, for what purpose, was this roll of manuscript ever forwarded to Box 3366? There appears no other way to reach the solution we seek in vain alone than to call to our assistance the wit or wisdom of our numerous constituency of readers, which we proceed to do.]

When Benjamin, our Governor and Commander in Chief, affects the speech of piety, he is at his best. Everybody is aware that, on all proper public occasions, he can exhibit more of the pith and essence of a true and undefiled religious training than any other noted and honored character of our day and generation. It is well that it is so. The dear old Commonwealth is rich in having at least one soul within her borders able to take her interests in an acceptable manner to the throne of Grace. The predecessor of Benjamin, John, was capable of a certain *poetic* grace in the construction of his calls to humiliation, which pleased the eye or ear of an æsthetic public, but the sceptic no less than the pious devotee could readily detect the absence of that genuine and unctuous quality which, the world over, alone gives informing life to the written or spoken word. In brief, the vital spark, the heavenly flame, was missing. Governor Long in all other respects was an excellent governor, as governors go, and his numerous friends were for that reason all the more grieved that he should come short of completing the circle of his rare virtues in this one essential particular. But, as the apostle tells us, there is a "diversity of gifts." For one man to possess all gifts would disprove Scripture. And this thought should go far to reconcile the true Christian to the law of averages which under the providential ruling distributes gifts, to some moderately, to others plentifully, or, withholding from some altogether, showers on others with measure heaped up and running over. The Commonwealth must perforce accept this larger view, and find her satisfaction in the *sum* of her governors rather than in discovering in *each* the full complement of those high qualities which not only adorn and make her the one altogether lovely among the States, but in the most practical and serious ways insure her children both their temporal and their eternal salvation.

> The peace of God is hers,
> If she but take the care
> To husband all the gifts
> He strews, some here, some there.

It behooves all people, therefore, who dwell within her borders, on this solemn yet joyful occasion, to give heed to the several requests of him she has chosen to let his light shine from all her highest places in this year of our Lord, 1883, — for his face hath he set toward Zion, his heart is lifted to the Most High. Let a thirsting and an hungered people make the most of him. The trail of his mantle covereth the years of the past, and his influence will flow onward enriching and ennobling many otherwise barren years.

The time appointed by his "proclamation for a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer" is the fifth of April. Post-dating, as it does, the ever-recurring and memorable day of "All Fools" by four rising and setting suns, the people and their clergy will have abundant opportunity for the return of their good sense, the recovery of all native wit which this first of April festival was purposely arranged, for the time being, to deprive them of. They can in no manner better manifest such recuperative power than by observing this fifth day in strict conformity with the recommendations of their truly Christian governor.

We do not specify all the things which he hath shown to be fit and comely in the way of humiliation and prayer, but we delight in repeating and giving our emphasis to the following: —

That we may unitedly humble ourselves in the presence of Almighty God, and acknowledge, with deep contrition, our manifold sins and transgressions;

That we may devoutly deprecate His judgments and implore His merciful forgiveness through the merits of our blessed Lord and Redeemer;

That He restore to us that temper and conduct by which alone we can hope to be happy in this world and in that which is to come;

That He would alike preserve us from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon day;

That He would graciously smile on the labors of the husbandmen, and cause the earth to bring forth her increase in due season;

That He would relieve our commerce from the embarrassments with which it is burthened, and grant that prosperity may again distinguish our navigation and fisheries, so that they who "go down to the sea in ships" and do business in great waters, may have abundant reason to praise His holy name;

That He would afford success to our manufactures and prosper all the work of our hands;

That He would graciously condescend to direct the government of the United States and give them wisdom to discern, and firmness to pursue the true interests of the country; that He would preserve us from war, and from all connections that lead to dishonor and adversity; that He would dispel the clouds that encompass us about, and continue to us the enjoyments of peace, liberty, and religion; that He would influence the governors of the several States to do everything within their respective spheres to preserve the union, order, tranquillity, and independence of the United States; that He would protect us from the assaults of open enemies, and from the snares of insidious friends; that he would suffer no weapon formed against us to prosper, but would set at naught the councils of those who devise mischief against us.

That He would vouchsafe His blessings on our university, our colleges and seminaries of learning; that He would bless all means used for propagating true religion, and promote the pious purposes of those who endeavor to disseminate a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, that all may learn His will and obey His commandments.

These are a few of the many suggestions to which we admonish the people to give heed on the day appointed.

Trusting, also, that this touch of needed advice to our ministers will fall as good seed into fruitful ground, we subscribe to it heartily: —

I do specially exhort the ministers of the gospel on that day to feed their flocks with the divine word, and not discourse upon political and other secular topics which may divert the serious thoughts of the people from humble worship of the Father.

Timely, indeed, is this whole manifesto of our Christian governor. The daring step of the Infidel had already profaned our legislative halls, and the semi-infidel had even crept into the gubernatorial chair. The loose ends of science were fast being gathered into a corded system to lasso even the Lord of our altar and drag him from his God-enthroned estate. The Holy Scriptures, too, were fast being borne under the muddy waves of every man's uninspired "common sense," or disrobed of their sacred sanctity and bound even as within the yellow covers of fiction. The dogmas of the atonement, the resurrection of the dead, and the endless misery of the finally impenitent were fading into the nebulous utterances of Plymouth Church, the "reforming" Andover School, and the Monday lectureship, when, lo! a voice heard often before on many a field of victory cries, "Halt!" We are summoned as by the command of the Eternal to the bemoaning of our sins, and the return to the sheltering arms of Holy Church. His ministers are directed to feed us from His holy word, eschewing all secular themes which would, as heretofore they have done, turn our thoughts from the "worship of the Father."

And what is more, and vastly encouraging as well, is the fact that this "joyful news of glad tidings" will fly as on the wings of the morning to the uttermost parts of the Union. State after State may be expected to wheel into line with Massachusetts, and once more the old Bay State will lead the nation to the mount of glory and transfiguration.

Hail! Benjamin! ('tis a goodly and a Scripture name); hail!

Thou that leadest all the great and glorious reforms that are to establish our wall of strong defence and blessedness in this world, lead us also into the everlasting peace that awaiteth the redeemed of Christ in the world to come! Amen! amen!

The reader — if perchance such an one there be wearing the garb and semblance of man — who shall wonder at the degree of emotion into which we have been betrayed will find his amazement speedily subsiding when we produce for the public eye a certain document which came into our possession months ago, bearing evidence of a wide spread conspiracy to deliver Massachusetts, body and soul, into the power of the unbelievers. How we obtained this damning revelation it doth not please us here and now to disclose. Verily, there are more things in heaven and earth than any of us have yet dreamed of. Thus far have we gone in our discoveries, yet "all before us lies the way."

The following, as it purports to be in a prefatory paragraph, which it is not necessary at this time to produce, was written in response to a request signed by some half-dozen well-known citizens. It will tell its own story; and when the reader has perused it we shall not disturb him with any word of comment upon the awful, swallowing depths of depravity it discloses. Enough that he sees them. So will the elevation of Benjamin F. Butler to the high office he now magnifies reveal the unmistakable Providence guiding and controlling for its good the affairs of at least one New England State.

Gentlemen:

. . . . . .

You are right. The utter divorce and separation of the State from all forms and shows of religion is demanded. If elected by the unsuspecting people of the Commonwealth to the high and responsible position you intimate numerous friends are [here is an erasure and blank that remains unfilled], I shall hesitate at no use of the means in hand to accomplish that end. I would begin by declining the oath. A simple affirmation would be substituted. I would omit from all proclamations or public documents I should be called on to issue, the old, stereotyped, and meaningless sentence, "God save the Commonwealth," &c. I would urge the dismissal of chaplains from both branches of the legislature. I would not hesitate of my own accord to banish those breeders of superstition from every institution where the Governor held the appointing and dismissing power. No proclamation or recommendation of any religious observance of any kind whatever would pass from my hand. I would urge the repeal of all laws against blasphemy and all statutes in support of the Christian Sabbath. In short, I would disestablish the "Church" in every sense and particular. I would say, "If Christianity has any virtue, let it stand on its own footing." The State cares for it no more than for Mohammedanism or Buddhism. It will foster and abet neither of them. In this same direction would be my effort to tax the churches, and to require them, as we do theatres and all public houses, to take out a license and give a guarantee of good behavior.

More I will not now say. But, believe me, gentlemen, I am with you in deadliest earnest against all privileges now granted the many institutions of religion, which, if left to themselves, would either thrive or perish on their own merits. Any individual or number of individuals have a right to have religion at their own cost and labor. But it is their lookout and no one else's. If any church, unbolstered by the State, can gain believers in heavenly gods who can and will, if sufficiently supplicated, cause water to run up hill in defiance of the common natural laws, there is no help for it except in the dissipation of ignorance. If people will pay priests to teach them and their children the doctrine of eternal damnation, the dogma of Christ's miraculous conception, his miracles, &c., why the principle of all men's liberty says, "Let them." They must do it until such folly is apparent to their own eyes. But the State must be rescued from the clutch they have upon it, and released forever from paying tribute to everything of that sort.

Your obedient servant,

—— — ——

BOSTON, September 21, 1881.

The Twin Children of Tyranny.

Any conscientious individual, with his eyes open, who will pause to take in a full breath of the prevailing political and social atmosphere, will find ample cause for serious reflection.

In the political world, in this nineteenth century of peace and good will to man, the novel spectacle presents itself of every European monarch surrounded by only half-trusted soldiers to protect him from being killed at sight by his "loving and dutiful subjects." Even in enlightened, constitutional Great Britain, the Queen shrinks before the haunting shadow of the assassin; and the members of the cabinet move among their official haunts in London like rats from hole to hole, guarded by spies, police, and soldiery. The public trial of a prominent "suspect" is attended by the issuance of special admission tickets to the court-room; and the most rigid inspection of applicants for admission is exercised, lest some spectator should stand in successful judgment over the judge, and rattle his learned "knowledge-box" with a revolver. The situation in the sham republic of France is an enigma which a handful of dynamite may suddenly solve any day; while in this glorious republic of the United States we read that the accidental locking of the wheels of the president's coach with those of an express wagon, the other day, created a "profound sensation" in Washington, lest it might have been a device of the assassin to slay the chief magistrate.

In social life, the spectacle is becoming more and more sickening. Prostitution, which used to be considered a distinct institution, outside the pale of recognized social life, has come to assume forms so subtle and seemly that it mingles "in the best circles" without offence. Meanwhile, the ratio of divorce to marriage in God-fearing and God-serving New England is already as one to eight; and the number of aimless, demoralized women outside of matrimony who make merchandise of their flesh is simply past finding out. A large percentage of these women are divorced, or disgusted young "widows," who, having had their eyes opened to the divine sham known as legal marriage, are left to confront the world without aim, motive, or individual integrity, and naturally drift into the market of flesh-pots, to sell whatever promise of individuality, purpose, or usefulness remains to the highest bidder.

Now, who and what are responsible for all this disintegration and chaos in the political and social world? Certainly not the Anarchists, nor the Communists, nor the Socialists, nor any other tabooed class of reformers. These much-dreaded reformers are the result, and not the cause, of a condition of things which has developed under the fostering care of Church and State. And what powers with which to combat chaos and demoralization have not Church and State had at their command, were they not themselves the very rotten roots of all social evil? From the start, they have had Almighty God himself as a backer. They have had all the money, all the land, all the saints, all the bayonets, and all the fools (whose name is legion) to work with; and yet the wee insignificant Devil, against all these tremendous odds, — backed only by a few wicked reformers here and there throughout history, — bids fair to score a near and final victory over the combined artillery of Heaven and all its agents in Church and State. If there is not something radically rotten in a machine that has turned up such a showing after being thousands of years on trial, with such almighty prerogatives, then humanity had better "pass in its chips" at once and die.

Church and State, being a double-headed conspiracy to deny Liberty and individual integrity, cannot survive the light of knowledge which their "Devil" is intended to typify. They have already brought the producing masses to a condition of poverty and bondage, which will not be long submitted to after the light begins to spread. They still manage to maintain themselves in a doubtful way by brute force; but the source of brute force resides in the victims themselves, and just as soon as the masses become level-headed enough to refuse to supply it against themselves, the game is irretrievably up. Fortunately there already are numerous individuals among the masses who comprehend the very simple secret of blocking the game, and the "providential" invention of powerful explosives comes to their aid as an offset against numbers. With this prospect ahead, it is no wonder that "profound sensations" are so easily created and are on the increase.

It is high time for the "profound sensationists" to take up the study of Liberty, and to begin to recognize the whole anti-social root of our political and social evils. If they knew their own interests, they would welcome the scientific Anarchists and discard the old and futile device of stoning the prophets. But, blinded and infatuated by the lustre of their own rottenness, the savage potentates of Church and State will probably continue to hasten the consummation of their own certain fate by repression. Whatever they may do, the signs of the time all portend that they but make more certain the victory of Liberty and the overthrow of the thieves and oppressors who have so long sat upon the neck of humanity.

Ben Butler's Piety.

If we had been selected to decide such a question, we should hardly have felt at liberty to say, without qualification, that Ben Butler was the wickedest man in Massachusetts, notwithstanding all the efforts he has apparently made to convince people that such was the truth. In fact, we have believed, in spite of himself, that he has perhaps no more real original sin in him, than have some others, who have been reputed to be far more orthodox than himself. Nevertheless, we were wholly unprepared for such a volcanic eruption of genuine, old fashioned, puritan piety as his Fast Day proclamation. We understand very well his amazing versatility; his power to do almost any thing and every thing in the legal, political, military, and financial line; but we had not conceived that we should ever see him on his knees, before all the world, acting the part of the penitent sinner, crying for mercy. Nor had we anticipated that he would ever set himself up as the legitimate successor of John Winthrop, Cotton Mather, and all the great lights of the puritan era, to tell the people of their sins, and call them to repentance. But in these particulars we were mistaken. We find that he is as great, and as versatile, in these new characters, as in any of his old ones. We are now satisfied that he has a real genius for divinity; that he has hitherto missed his true vocation; and that if he had taken to the pulpit, he would have eclipsed every body in the puritan line, from John Bunyan down to Talmage and Joe Cook.

But we think that in matters of taste, propriety, and consistency, he cannot be admired. For example, if he really has such a burden of sin on his own soul, as he appears to have, we should have expected that he would go into his closet with it, or to a regular revival meeting, and there wrestle with God until he should "get grace;" instead of vomiting his confessions upon the public, who have no interest in the matter, and care nothing for his immortal soul, if he has one. Or if he really believes that the people of Massachusetts (and, of course, of the rest of the country) are such a set of lost and undone sinners, as he represents them to be, we think he has no excuse for continuing in any secular or political employment; but that he should at once renounce all worldly things, and devote himself wholly to the salvation of souls.

Until we had read this proclamation, we had regarded him simply as an ambitious politician, not overscrupulous, as indeed politicians are not expected to be; and we had actually feared that he might never reach the presidency, by reason of the puritan sects being arrayed solidly against him. But now we feel sure that, if he loses that prize, it will not be from any lack of piety on his part, but because so many other aspirants for fame and power, seeing themselves distanced, will conspire against him, and make the credulous believe that there is really no more depth to his piety, than there was to that of Wilson, or Garfield, or so many others, whose apparent sanctity did so much to make "their election sure."

But that his present godliness is perfectly sincere, seems to be proved by the fact, that he is seeking so earnestly to make it profitable to our business interests; and especially to our "navigation." We have always noticed that a man's piety may be depended on as genuine, when he relies on it as a means of promoting his worldly prosperity. We may be sure on this point, for even the scriptures tell us that where a man's treasure is, there will his heart — that is, his religion — be also. And Ben evidently takes it for granted that the public piety is of this profitable kind. And he proposes to utilize it in favor of "navigation." That is his present hobby. Only a few weeks ago he attended a meeting held in this city, to see what could be done to revive it. At this meeting he made a very elaborate speech, to show that the ruin that had fallen upon the shipping interest was owing to the want of such bounties as had once been granted to it. But as nobody but himself, and John Roach, and Robeson (of bad odor) seem to be of that opinion, he turns imploringly to the Almighty for help in the matter. And he seems to believe that a general confession of our sins, and a united supplication for forgiveness, *coupled with entreaties for our "navigation,"* would be likely to gain a hearing at the throne of grace. So he calls upon "the ministers and people of every religious denomination" to "unitedly humble themselves in the presence of Almighty God, and acknowledge, with deep contrition, our manifold sins and transgressions; that we may devoutly deprecate His judgments, and implore His merciful forgiveness through the merits of our blessed Lord and Redeemer." And "At the same time that we look with all humility to His grace for the remission of our sins, let us, with one mind and one voice, supplicate His blessings for us, . . . *that He would relieve our commerce from the embarrassments with which it is burthened*, and grant that prosperity may again distinguish our *navigation* and fisheries, so that they who 'go down to the sea in ships,' and do business in great waters, may have abundant reason to praise His holy name."

Now, all this, interpreted in the light of his aforesaid speech in favor of bounties to our navigation means that if we confess our sins with sufficient humility, and pray mightily for the remission of them, he thinks the Almighty may be thereby induced to use His influence to get a new navigation act through Congress; or, if He will not do *that*, that He will take the whole business into His own hands, and by His miraculous power, withdraw our capital from manufactures, and from railroads, and telegraphs, and government bonds, and invest them in "navigation."

Seriously, we apprehend that the Almighty will do nothing of the kind. Nevertheless, we have no objection that Butler and all "the ministers and people, of every religious denomination" should "humble themselves in His presence," and "with one mind, and one voice, supplicate Him" to look after our investments, and see whether they are all sound and safe. If anything should come of their petitions, we shall of course conclude that Butler, and all "the ministers and people, of every religious denomination" have more influence in the counsels of the Almighty than we now give them credit for. If, on the other hand, their confessions, humiliations, and supplications should avail nothing, we think that Butler and the rest of them will forever after be less ready to confess their sins, and humble themselves before the Almighty, from purely commercial motives, than they are now.

Mr. Gov. Ben Butler, one word in your private ear, We perhaps place no higher estimate on the intellectual calibre of the clergy than you do. We have no fear that they will ever set the rivers on fire. Nevertheless we apprehend that they are competent to see the impossibility of complying with your utterly contradictory exhortations, to wit, that they pray lustily for bounties on navigation, and for various other secular and political things which you have at heart, and at the same time *abstain* from all "dis-

course upon secular and political topics," and feed their flocks with the "Divine Word" only. We apprehend they will say to you, that even you yourself cannot thus ride two horses at the same time in directly opposite directions. And we suspect that they will even say to each other, "Is this man, who can make such a bull as this, the great lawyer, [what if they should say the great pettifogger?] who has spent so large a portion of his life in splitting hairs between north and northwest side, to cheat justice out of her dues?"

On the whole, we beg to remind Butler again, that, great as he is in war, in law, in finance, and on the stump, he has really missed his true vocation; that clearly his *forte* is divinity — divinity of the true, puritanical, original sin, penitent sinner variety; and that, inasmuch as he is an older man, and has perhaps more real genius, than either Talmage or Joe Cook, he has a better claim than either of them, to be the first puritan pope in the United States.

And now we wish to say, in all kindness, to Messrs. Talmage and Cook:

"In your great race for spiritual power, we think you will find that notwithstanding all his bulls and blunders, you are no matches for Ben Butler; that, if necessary to his success, he will plunge headlong into such a sea of confessions of original sin, actual transgressions, and total depravity, that you will feel that he is justly and forever lost; but that he will, the next moment, come up smiling, on great waves of salvation by grace, justification by faith, imputed righteousness, vicarious atonement, eternal decrees, and all the other essentials of the puritan faith, in a way that neither you, nor any other religious prestidigitators, can equal. We advise you not to attempt it. All *that* is his thunder, and you will only make yourselves ridiculous if you try to steal it. We think, therefore, that you have but one chance against him; that is this: It is no part of the puritan creed, but only a piece of pure Butlerism, that, 'At the same time that we look with all humility to His grace for the remission of our sins,' we should 'with one mind and one voice, supplicate Him' to '*relieve our commerce*' by helping us to lobby a new navigation act through Congress, or by inducing our people to divert their capital from manufactures, railroads, telegraphs, or United States bonds. We do not believe that supplications of this kind will have any effect whatever, though offered by Ben Butler, and all his hosts. We therefore recommend that you make yourselves easy on that point; and that, if you 'supplicate' the Almighty at all, in regard to investments of capital, you beseech Him to let those that have proved so profitable, remain as they are. We think you will be much more likely to have your prayers answered, and thus leave Ben in the lurch, than if you do so foolish a thing as to add your supplications to his in favor of bounties on navigation. Believing that you have sense enough to see that this is your true policy, and that Ben, notwithstanding his agility in jumping from one hobby to another, will feel obliged to cling to his navigation scheme, now that he has got fairly astride of it, and gone twice round the track, we wish both you and him a fair field and no favor, and may the devil take the hindmost."

To all the other clericals, except Talmage and Cook, we would say, that the days of unendurable cant, sanctimony, and hypocrisy are fast passing away; and when it comes to this, that a fellow like Ben Butler can outstrip the whole clerical profession in that line, it is time that the profession itself should look at themselves in the glass he holds up to them.

Not the Chinese, but the Land-Thieves.

[WRITTEN FOR LIBERTY.]

The people of California have been severely lectured by Eastern liberals for their opposition to the Chinese, and it is often charged that unreasoning race-prejudice is at the bottom of all the clamor on the Pacific coast for relief from cheap labor. Eastern men, taking a broad view of what is called the Chinese question, accuse the Californians of narrow-mindedness and mental barbarism, to which the exasperated Californians reply by contemptuously calling their critics "sentimentalists," and telling them to mind their own business.

As almost if not quite all the conflicts and quarrels of men are misunderstandings, so I think this Chinese question is but a misunderstanding. I have good reason for so thinking, having been an earnest advocate of exclusion on the Californian plan, and having seen the evil effects of Chinese labor upon the condition of the white workers of the Pacific coast. When I first went to California, I was enough of a "sentimentalist" to believe that there should be at least one country in the world free to all men; and, if I thought anything about the Chinese, it was that they had as clear a title to the use of the land of America as anybody else. But I observed many things that disturbed these ideas and *seemed* to demonstrate the practical fallacy of applying the broad principles of the Declaration of Independence to our dealings with the Chinese. It was very clear that wages were steadily falling in California and that the condition of the working people was yearly becoming less prosperous. In 1877, the difficulty of obtaining employment had increased to such an extent that men were glad to work in the cities at a dollar a day, and discontent assumed a dangerous form in the notorious Sand-lot agitation.

Coincident with these phenomena were the facts that Chinese laborers had increased in numbers, and could afford to work for wages below the rate at which white men with families could make decent livings. To the Californian it was self-evident that making a living had become a matter of no small difficulty in a country that formerly overflowed with gold and supported all in comparative luxury. What more natural than the conclusion that competition had lowered wages on the supply-and-demand principle?

Cheap Chinese labor was a palpable fact, and in common with nearly a million other persons I accepted it as a sufficient explanation of the industrial depression afflicting California. Although my predilections were for the doctrine of universal brotherhood and equality of human rights regardless of race, I seemed to find myself confronted by a practical problem of vital importance that could not be solved by the application of these general principles. Between reducing white workers to the condition of Chinese coolies, and prohibiting Chinese from entering into competition, it appeared wiser to choose the latter course. Granting the premises, it certainly was better to exclude the Chinese and thus preserve the gains made by labor under our system of civilization than to run the risk of losing them without conferring any compensating benefit upon either class.

Such are the considerations by which most Californians are influenced in their opposition to Chinese immigration. Race-prejudice does not enter into the question, for in a mixed population like that of California such prejudices are quickly obliterated. Among the very people of New England who are loudest in denunciation of the anti-Chinese movement, there is stronger race-prejudice respecting the Irish than ever existed in California against the Mongolian.

But I am satisfied that the labor question is as generally misunderstood in California as the anti-Chinese movement is in the East, and that, when I shared the opinions prevalent on the Pacific coast, I reasoned from incorrect premises. The actual curse of California is not Chinese labor, but land monopoly protected by the conspiracy called the United States government. The decline of economic as well as actual wages dates from the completion of the overland railroad and can be shown to be the inevitable result of the land-grabbing schemes connected with and growing out of this monstrous monopoly. As rent has increased, wages have fallen, and the wealth produced by labor has been concentrated in the hands of the few. Nobody will pretend that the railroad men and their fellow-conspirators, the desert land grabbers and bonanza kings, ever produced the hundreds of millions held by them. This wealth was produced by the working men of California, white and Chinese, and both were robbed of it by the ingenious system of plundering devised by lawmakers for the protection of capital.

These millions were not sent out of the country by Chinese workers. Every Chinese laborer has produced more wealth than he ever got paid for, and the lower his wages the greater the margin of possible plunder for the legally authorized exploiter of men. Clearly, if every man had free access to the land and were not robbed of the product of his labor, there could be no poverty in California. A man's wages would be simply whatever his labor produced, and a Chinaman would get the same wages as a white man for the same amount of labor. The Chinaman is a fellow-sufferer with the white laborer, but, his capacity for enduring privation being greater, he is enabled to continue production when the proportion of wealth left to him by the robbers is less than the minimum rate of wages which the white man can subsist upon, and continue production. The land monopolists, by appropriating the best land, have lowered the margin of cultivation in California, thus reducing wages and increasing rent, and this process is going on every year. If the Chinaman had free access to land which would yield him more wealth by cultivation than he now receives for his labor, he would demand higher wages. If the white man had free access to the land in California, it would not matter to him what wages were paid to Chinese laborers. But the land is made inaccessible by the price at which it is held by the monopolists,—that is, the economic rent of the land,—and labor cannot find an opportunity for profitable employment, but is compelled to accept wages equivalent to what it could produce upon land the next grade lower than the poorest held in private ownership.

There are thousands of men in San Francisco who would gladly go upon the land and become producers, and there are hundreds of thousands of fertile acres lying uncultivated within sight of San Francisco. Why do not these men become independent farmers instead of remaining in the city to compete with Chinese cigarmakers, shoemakers, etc., for wages barely sufficient to support life? Simply because the land is held by monopolists who are protected by law in preventing those who have a right to the land from using it.

Clearly, the eviction of all the Chinese from California would give but temporary and insignificant relief, and yet I would favor such a course, as I now advocate strict enforcement of the restriction act, for the sole purpose of demonstrating to California the real nature of the evil oppressing her and clearing away the misunderstanding in which the Chinese question is involved. The Chinese being removed, the irritation caused by them would at once disappear, and the Californians, finding low wages still prevalent and labor oppressed, would look more deeply into the questions of land monopoly and government quackery, and perhaps devise a remedy. This would be unpleasant for the Stanfords, Sargents, Carrs, Floods, Fields, and the whole band of conspirators, but I am convinced it would not be without benefit to California. Several misunderstandings would probably disappear with more or less celerity, could this befogging Chinese question be put aside for a time.

To those familiar with the land question, nothing new will appear in the above, and my only apology for writing is the belief that it may be of interest to some Eastern liberals to know how an anti-Chinese Californian views the problem in the light of Liberty.

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